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lege-green, erected in A.D. 1701, on which it is represented without crest, supporters, or motto, plainly surrounded by a cornucopizæ; but among the embellishments of the Translation of the Great Charter, by Dr. Lucas, before alluded to, the escutcheon is set out surmounted by a coronet or cap of dignity, supported by a goose and a cock, and having on a scroll the motto, "Vigilance and Valour." At present the chief magistrates of the city, in their official proclamations, retain the cap of dignity, but have dismissed the goose and cock, together with the motto; perhaps they are aware that the geese and cocks-combs are sufficiently numerous personally, and a proper sense of modesty prevents the assumption of the motto in this degenerate generation. R. ARMSTRONG.

Our ingenious correspondent, as well as Harris and the other authorities on whom he relies, appear to be in error in supposing the seal last given to belong to the City, and to represent its arms. It is evidently the seal of the Provosts of the City, and must be of an antiquity anterior to the year 1266, when the names of these officers were changed to *Bailiffs*, who were, in their turn, changed to Sheriffs, in 1549, in the second year of King Edward VI. The inscription is, "*Sigillum Prepositure Dublinie*," and the three lions of the Royal Arms of England, no doubt were intended to denote that the Provosts were the *King's officers* in the corporation, who collected and accounted for the fee farm rent and other royal revenues. Though, therefore, it has been sometimes considered to be the *Arms of the City*, it is obviously a mistake. B.

The following letter from King Charles the First, evinces how highly that sovereign estimated the services of the citizens of Dublin. It is the last article entered in the "*Domesday Book of Dyvelin City*."

"CHARLES I.

"Trusty and well beloved we greet you well. We have been so abundantly satisfied by our right trusty and entirely beloved cousin and counsellor, James, Marquess of Ormond, our Lieutenant General of that our Kingdom, of your constancy and zeal to our service, not only by your giving your support, far beyond your estate and abilities, towards the relief of our army there, without which it could not have subsisted, but likewise for the engaging yourselves for the raising of money towards the transportation of that part of our army which was sent hither to our aid. As we cannot but take special notice of your said good affections to us, especially when we see such pregnant testimonies thereof in these times of defection, when so great numbers of our subjects in our several kingdoms have cast off their duty and national allegiance. And therefore we do assure you on the word of a king, that we will in due time remember these your services for your honour and advantage, which we will and require you to make known to our good people of that our city; and that we do very much commiserate the many great and heavy burthens, which for the advantage of our service they do daily bear, which, (as we are informed,) hath in a manner occasioned a total decay of trade, which is the very life of a city, and consequently the consumption of all their means, whereof we are exceedingly sensible, and will upon all occasions be ready to relieve them the best way we may. Given at our Court at Oxford, the 23d February, 1643. "By His Majesty's Command,

"EDWARD NICHOLAS."

ANCIENT IRISH POETRY.

SIR,—The 25th Number of your valuable Journal contains a short, but interesting account of Inchmore Castle, on the Nore, the residence of Oliver Grace, the heir of the ancient baronial house of Courtstown, who died in the life-time of his father, in the year 1637. In Mr. Hardiman's beautiful collection of Irish Poems, (Vol. II.) there are some elegiac stanzas on his death, which, from the rare beauty of their poetry, harmony of their numbers, and the freedom of their structure from those alliterations and other minute restrictions which have cramped the metre of many of the other valuable compositions of our Irish Bards, seem to me well worthy of a place in your Journal, if you think it not sufficient to refer your readers to Mr. Hardiman's work. I send you a literal translation which I have attempted, and in which I have most strictly

adhered to the original, which, however, it will be necessary to understand in order fully to appreciate the beauties of the poem. Your readers will perceive that the translation which I have sent you does not differ materially from Doctor Drummond's accurate metrical version.

I should observe that Mr. Hardiman places the death of Oliver Grace in the year 1604; but this is a mistake, as will be evident by referring to the interesting "Memoirs of the Grace Family," there being no person of that family whom the elegy could possibly suit, except Oliver Grace, of Inchmore, called *Fike*, or the poet, to whom it is applicable in every particular. He is stated, in the Memoirs, to be the son of Robert Grace, Baron of Courtstown, by his wife Eleanor daughter of David Condon, Lord of Condon's country, in the county of Cork, by Eleanor, daughter of Richard, Lord Poer, of Curraghmore; but by a reference to the will of Sir Richard Shee, dated 24th December, 1609 (a copy of which is in my possession)—whose daughter, Letitia Shee, was married to John Grace, of Courtstown, father of the said Robert Grace, and grandfather of Oliver, of Inchmore—it appears that Robert Grace's wife was the daughter of Patrick Condon. The following are the extracts from the will referring to this subject.

"Item, where-upon the agreement of marriage of Mr. Patrick Condon, of my grandchilde, Robert Grace, to his daughter, Mrs. Ellen Condon, the said Patrick delivered unto me £100 sterling current money of England, in bullion, to be given in preferment to my daughter, is daughter Margaret Grace that is with me, I will that my wyfe and executors, with the advice of some of my feoffees and brethren, shall provide a fytt husbunde for her, and that myne executors of my soules portion, shall deliver unto her and her husband, in marriage goods, one hundred pounds sterling current money of England, in Bullion; and if God shall dispose of the said Margaret before marriage, then my will is, that my executors shall pay the same £100 to her brethren, Richard and Edmund Grace, in regard that they are poor orphans, haveinge nothing leaft unto them for their mayntenance by their father and mother; and if they should die before they receive the said moneye, then I will that the said moneye be paid unto their elder brother Robert Grace. Item, when Mr. Patrick Condon is bounde by bonde to me that Edmond Purcell of Ballyfoille, shall marry my grandchilde, Catherine Grace, or in lieu thereof to pay unto her £300 sterling, current moneye in England, for the preferment of the saide Catherine Grace to a husband, I earnestly beseech my sonne and heire, and the rest of my executors, upon my blessinge, if neede be, by suite of law, upon the refusal of the saide Purcell, to compell the said Patrick Condon, upon his bonde, to pay the sayde moneye to the use aforesaide; and yf she should happen to die before preferment, the said £300, to be to her brother, Mr. Robert Grace, in regard that he most lovinglie and kindlie bestowed his own mariadge for the benefytt of her and her sister by myne advice and intreatie. Item, I leave to my father Lettisse Shee's daughter, Margaret Grace, a flock of sheep, in number foure skore. Item, I leave to my saide daughter, is son and heir, Robert Grace, one of my double gillt bowels of plate with his cover, wherein I commonlie drinke aqua vite and clarett wyne, as a token of remembrance of my love."

The will of Sir Richard Shee has been lost by the Pre-rogative Office, where it was proved in 1608, or it could not have escaped the accurate researches of the author of "Memoirs of the Grace Family." W. W.

ELEGY ON THE DEATH OF OLIVER GRACE.

BY JOHN FITZWALTER WALSH.

1. A gloomy mist is in each mountain, a mist that appeared not before; there is a sullen silence in noontide; the deep voice of sorrow alone is heard.

2. The sound of death is in the wind: alas! to us 'tis the approach of sorrow! The raven with hoarse voice, portends the hour of the dead.

3. Is it for thee, O noble youth of my heart, that the banshee mournful wails, in the midst of the silent lone'y night; plaintiff she sings the song of death

4. Each wall and tower replies to her with its lonely sullen echo: the cock has forgotten his wonted call, and announces not time nor hour.

5. Alas, youthful Oliver of my heart, it is thy death the banshee laments—it is that which brings night on the day—it is it which brings sadness on the people.

6. Woe is me, nought now remains to us in the hero's stead, but lamentation and tears: pouring out of tears, weeping and lamentation, hereafter to us, and breaking of hearts.

7. Alas! O death, thou hast laid low for ever the blossom and beauty of our highest branch:—not satisfied with thy conquest till the head of our race sunk into the grave.

8. Strong was his arm in the clash of swords, defending the right of his race and kindred, beneath the standard of his father:—and Ormond* who acquired fame afar.

9. Not usual in Courtstown is the mist of Lonon that cannot be dispelled: O the heart of its faithful lord is wounded through the death of the youth of mighty deeds.

10. The true heir of his name, his fame and his power, and the heir of his domains in each region of Erin: Stately as the oak was his aspect—he promised to spread wide his branches.

11. But not thus was the hero's fate:—It was to descend alone to the silent tomb. Alas! 'twas a long woe to him in his day, and sorrow of heart to his spouse† for ever.

12. She is a mother oppressed with grief—descending swiftly to her spouse in the grave—the father of her children, and her first love:—Alas, anguish is her lot.

13. No more shall he follow the chace under the dark vales of the misty hills;—the sweet sounding horn no more shall he hear—nor the voice of the hounds on the mountain top.

14. No more shall we behold him on his fleet young steed, bounding o'er fence and dyke:—There is an eclipse on his beauty for ever; deep mist has descended on his greatness.

15. Weak lies his bounteous hand; dead and powerless is his manly heart—the descendant of heroes, and friend of the bard, the lover of the minstrel's lofty strain.

16. Thy fame needs not the light of song; but my lament shall ascend on high, and my tears shall fall at the close of each day, on the tomb of the hero for whom my heart is broken. W. W.

* James the 12th Earl, and afterwards 1st Duke of Ormond.

† Joan, wife of Oliver Grace, was the daughter and heir of Sir Cyprian Horsfall of Innisnagg, only son of John Horsfall, Bishop of Ossory, a native of Yorkshire, who succeeded to that see in 1686, and died there in 1689. Oliver Grace's son and heir, John Grace, was a member of the Council of Confederate Catholics, and was permitted by Cromwell to compound for his estates.

ON COMETS.

There is no branch of physical Astronomy more difficult to explain, or understand, than the theory of comets, which is at present but very imperfectly investigated, even by the most skilful astronomers. Comets have no visible disc, and shine with a faint nebulous light, accompanied with a train, or tail, turned from the sun. They appear in every region of the heavens, and move in every possible direction. In the ages of ignorance and superstition, they were regarded as the infallible harbingers of great political and physical convulsions; wars, pestilence, and famine, were among the dreadful evils which they foretold. But we trust that the age of mental darkness and superstition is now fled. For, although modern philosophy is yet unable to discover the nature and use of comets, they are at present regarded only as bodies attached to the different systems of the universe for some useful purpose, which the sagacity of some future ages, will, perhaps, be able partly to explain. The laws by which they move, or in other words, the elements of no less than *ninety-seven*, have been observed and calculated from the year 837, till the present time, of which 24 have passed between the orbit of Mercury and the sun; 38 between the orbits of Mercury and Venus; 21 between the orbits of Venus and our earth;

15 between the orbits of the earth and Mars; 3 between the orbits of Mars and Ceres; and 1 between the orbit of Ceres and Jupiter. Their orbits are inclined in every possible angle; but there are only eight whose inclination is less than ten degrees, consequently there is less danger of their interfering with the planetary bodies. The great comet which appeared in 1682, and 1759, may, as I calculate, be expected to appear in 1835, or two years hence; its periodic time being 76 years, and 212 days. When we examine a comet with a good telescope it appears like a mass of vapour, surrounding a dark nucleus, of different degrees of density in different comets. As it approaches the sun, its pale cloudy light becomes more brilliant; and when it reaches its perihelion, it is often brighter than the planets. The tails are generally concave towards the sun, the fixed stars are always visible through them, and sometimes they are so brilliant, that they have been distinguished during full moon, and even after the rising of the sun. Astronomers have entertained various opinions respecting the comets; the Peripatetics supposed they were meteors generated in the higher regions of our atmosphere, after the nature of falling stars. But it has been demonstrated that they move in higher regions than the moon, and consequently they are above the earth's atmosphere. Tycho Brahe, and Appian, imagined that the tail was occasioned by the rays of the sun transmitted through the nucleus of the comet, which they supposed were transparent like a lens. Kepler thought that it was the atmosphere of the comet driven behind it by the impulsion of the sun's rays. Descartes ascribed the phenomenon to the refraction of the nucleus. Sir Isaac Newton maintained that the tail of a comet is a thin vapour ascending by means of the sun's heat, as smoke or vapour does from the earth. Euler supposes that the heat is produced by the impulsion of the solar rays driving off the atmosphere of the comet, and that the curvature of the tail is the combined effect of this impulsive force, and the gravitation of the atmospheric particles to the nucleus of the comet. Dr. Hamilton, on the other hand, thinks it a stream of electric matter issuing from the body of the comet. From these various accounts, the reader will probably coincide with the writer's opinion, which is, that the theory of comets has never yet been discovered! Neither is there sufficient authority for maintaining that they are so intensely hot when approaching the sun. The chemical properties of their atmosphere may be such as will totally exclude the action of the *calorific* rays of the sun from producing any great heat on the nucleus of the comet; and to maintain that these bodies are employed to convey back to the planets the electric fluid, which some philosophers imagine is continually dissipating; that one of them occasioned the great deluge which seems to have over-run our globe; and that they are intended to supply the fuel dissipated by the sun, is to give loose reins to conjecture, without contributing, in the smallest degree, to the progress of science. When multiplied observations shall have added to the imperfect knowledge which we at present possess, we may then be allowed the liberty of indulging in ingenious speculations. Laplace, who as an astronomer, is entitled to our highest respect, observes, that the fears which the appearance of comets at one time inspired, have been succeeded by an apprehension of another nature, lest among the great number which traverse the planetary system in every direction, one of them should destroy the earth. But, he says, they pass so rapidly near us that the effect of their attraction is not to be feared. It is only by striking the earth that they could produce the dreadful effect; but the shock though possible is very improbable in the course of an age. Nevertheless, the small probability of such an event, if it be considered with respect to a long course of ages, may become very great:—We may imagine the effect of such a shock upon the earth. The axis and rotatory motion being changed, the seas would abandon their former position, and rush to the new equator; the great part of men and animals would be drowned, or destroyed, by the violent shock impressed on the terrestrial globe—entire species annihilated—all the monuments of human industry swept away. Such are the disasters which might ensue from the shock of a comet. See Laplace's *Système du Monde*, and Pingré *Cometographie*.

Ballymena.

J. GETTY.